

GOVERNOR'S TEACHER CABINET MEETING MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 25, 2013-1:00 P.M.

PATRICK HENRY BUILDING-CABINET CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present:

Secretary of Education Laura Fornash, Delegate Algie Howell, Delegate Kirk Cox, Lauren Murray, Jennifer Bury, Sally Ann Smith, Tracey Zaval, Cathy Collier, Catherine Moretz, Ellaine Cabellon, Paige Tucker, Stephen Schwartz, Betsy Hall, Tom Coen, Julia Blanchard, Thomas Foster, Kathy Galford, Artice Appling, Connie Plum, James Popek, Lisa Williams, Gary Castro, Karen Cross, Marion Broglie, Trish Apicella, Alonzo Batson

Others Present:

Deputy Secretary of Education Javaid Siddiqi, Special Assistant Ashley Myers, DPB Budget Analyst Scott Cummings, Assistant Superintendent of Teacher Education and Licensure Patty Pitts

Absent:

None

I. Welcome

The Honorable Laura W. Fornash, Secretary of Education, welcomed members.

I. Swearing in of members

The Honorable Janet V. Kelly, Secretary of the Commonwealth facilitated the swearing in ceremony and taking of oaths.

II. Update on K-12 Teacher Legislation

Delegate Kirk Cox spoke to recent legislation directly impacting teachers and highlighted a few of the accomplishments by the current administration. He encouraged the group to advocate for policies that promote teachers like Strategic Compensation Grants.

Delegate Algie Howell welcomed members and thanked them for serving on the cabinet. He also remarked on the many changes in Virginia education over the decades and commended Governor McDonnell on doing more for public education and higher education than any other Governor during his 10 years in office.

III. Introductions

Brief introductions were made by all in attendance.

IV. Presentation on State Budget

Scott Cummings with the Department of Planning and Budget gave a presentation on Virginia's budget process.

V. Administrative Overview

Assistant Superintendent of Teacher Education and Licensure, Patty Pitts, presented an overview of the Department of Education.

VI. Discussion of Ideas, Recommendations & Strategies

Deputy Secretary of Education, Javaid Siddiqi, facilitated whole group and breakout discussions on Instructional Practices and Professional Development Opportunities and Increasing Parent and Community Engagement.

Instructional Practices and Professional Development Opportunities:

- Teachers need an incentive to present and instruct at professional development seminars (PDS) whether they are among their own grade level cohorts, school, division, or at the state conference level. The best and most constructive professional development is done by current teachers, not business people.
 - How can we incentivize good teachers to conduct PDS?
- If it is not tied to the evaluation, we cannot fund it. You can accumulate all of the points in the world, but if you do not prove efficient in your evaluation, it means nothing.
- Quality vs. quantity issue. Often it is about the hours accumulated towards credit/points rather than the quality of the professional development. This needs to be addressed.
- Re-licensure points for professional development.
- Using veteran teachers for professional development seems to prove more valuable than just hearing what the latest buzz is about.
- Teachers are often required to go to seminars that do not correlate with the content area they are teaching.
 - How do we encourage focus areas that have logical connections?
- There can be many opportunities for professional development, but if there isn't time to implement these practices in the classroom than it is for naught. There needs to be time for implementation.
 - A lot of this implementation time is driven by local superintendents but we can work to make a model that will address this.
- Communication with VDOE on regarding best practices.
 - How can we create a mechanism for VDOE to share these best practices with teacher across the Commonwealth?
- All teachers should have the same access to professional development, no matter what region you are from.
 - What about creating a Teacher University or HUB?
 - Similar to the ALL STUDENTS campaign, a campaign titled "ALL TEACHERS" could focus on a high quality professional development effort.
- Instructional rounds or school walks are known best practices. However, no matter how much you stress that they are non-evaluative in nature, most teachers are uncomfortable opening their classrooms up to their colleagues and participating in this type of practice.
- There are always concerns about professional development in local budgets.
- Teacher Direct is a new website the VDOE has just for teachers.
www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/teacher_direct/

Increasing Parent and Community Engagement:

- Use social media - Twitter, Facebook, etc. to better inform and involve parents and students.

- By hosting online events and live chats, you can involve parents who cannot physically be present. Online and internet outreach shouldn't be the only outreach, however, as this is not an option for every single family.
- Create incentives for businesses to get involved.
- Offer tax breaks for parents with students who show growth.
- Community service creates opportunities to build relationships and personal engagement.
- Direct contact from teachers and administrators at the very beginning of the school year, during conference time, and throughout the school year is still best practice to involve parents' in their child's education.
- In some communities, parents don't take ownership.
 - How can we get them to take ownership?

VII. Closing

Secretary Fornash and Delegate Howell made closing remarks and thanked the teachers for attending.